

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 02178 231131Z
ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 IGA-02 HEW-04 OES-07
/090 W

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7551
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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JOINT STATE/AID MESSAGE FROM CHARGE

DACCA FOR RLA D. ROBERTSON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID, CE

SUBJ: MALARIA CONTROL

REF: STATE 144765

1. I UNDERSTAND AID'S CONCERN REGARDING THE DISPOSAL OF NON-AID-FINANCED MALATHION CURRENTLY IN GSL POSSESSION, AND DO NOT PROPOSE TO QUARREL WITH YOUR DECISION TO DEFER LOAN SIGNING FOR THE TIME BEING. HOWEVER, MY CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO THIS PROJECT REACHES MORE DEEPLY TO THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE POLITICAL VIABILITY OF THE ENTIRE AID PROG AM IN SRI LANKA.

2. IN THE PAST, WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, THE LOCAL PERCEPTION HAS BEEN THAT UNDER UNP GOVERNMENTS THE LEVEL OF TOTAL US AID INVOLVEMENT HAS RISEN SHARPLY. THE OTHER MAJOR PROJECT WHICH SHOULD REACH THE SIGNING STAGE LATER THIS YEAR, BUT AFTER THE ELECTION, IS THE \$6 MILLION MAHAWELI STATE II PRO-

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JECT. THE SIGNING OF THIS PROJECT AND THE MALARIA LOAN SHORTLY AFTER A CHANGE IN GOVT (IF SUCH OCCURS) WOULD CERTAINLY REVIVE THE OLD ISSUE. WE HAD HOPED TO AVOID APPEARANCE OF A REPETITION OF THIS PATTERN BY BRINGING TO THE SIGNING STAGE AT LEAST ONE, IF NOT BOTH MAJOR PROJECTS PRIOR TO THE JULY 21 ELECTION, SO AS TO EMPHASIZE THE ONGOING DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN PARTISAN-ORIENTED NATURE OF OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO

SRI LANKA. WHILE WE AND THE GSL PROFESSIONALS KNOW THAT PROJECTS DO NOT MATERIALIZE OUT OF THIN AIR, BUT ARE MONTHS, IF NOT YEARS IN GESTATION, THIS IS NEITHER CLEAR TO THE PUBLIC NOR PERSUASIVE WITH THOSE WHOSE INTEREST IS TO OPPOSE ANY US ACTIVITY IN THIS COUNTRY.

3. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THE MALATHION PROCURED WITH WHO SPECS WILL IN ALL LIKELIHOOD NOT BE EXPENDED BEFORE SEPTEMBER (DETAILS FOLLOW SEPTTEL). THE MALARIA SERVICE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DRAFTED EN MASSE TO HELP AS ELECTION SUPERVISORS AND JUDGES THROUGH THE PERIOD OF THE CAMPAIGN AND ITS IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH. FURTHERMORE, THE GSL HAS FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES SUSPENDED MALARIA CONTROL THROUGHOUT THE RURAL AREAS, IN ORDER NOT TO CAUSE WAVES AMONG THE VOTING PUBLIC PRIOR TO THE ELECTION. THIS MAY BE REGRETTABLE FROM A PUBLIC HEALTH STANDPOINT, BUT SHOULD HARDLY BE SURPRISING.

4. I THEREFORE PROPOSE THAT ON OR BEFORE JULY 1 WE PREPARE A PRESS RELEASE, CLEARED WITH APPROPRIATE MINISTRY OF HEALTH/ MALARIA CONTROL PEOPLE, INDICATING THAT AID/W HAS APPROVED - IN PRINCIPLE, OR WHATEVER OTHER RESTRICTIVE FORMULATION AID/W WOULD PREFER - A LOAN FOR MALATHION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12.0 MILLION, WITH AN INITIAL AUTHORIZATION OF \$5.0 MILLION, AND THAT THE DETAILS OF THE LOAN AGREEMENT ARE TO BE WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, IN THE HOPE THAT A FORMAL AGREEMENT CAN BE CONCLUDED WITHIN THE NEXT TWO TO THREE MONTHS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PRESS RELEASE WOULD BE SO WORDED AS TO GIVE THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN IN THE WORKS FOR SOME TIME, OBVIOUSLY UNDER THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT.

5. IF AID/W HAS ANY OBJECTION TO THIS PROCEDURE, OR SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE CONTENT OF SUCH A RELEASE, I WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING THEM BY THE FIRST PART OF NEXT WEEK. PERKINS

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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